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Twenty-third special session
Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mónica Martínez (Ecuador)

Review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action

Further actions and initiatives for overcoming obstacles to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraph 125 B of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part IV)) at its _____ meeting on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

Paragraph 125 B was replaced by the following:

Take measures, with the full participation of women, to create, at all levels, an enabling environment conducive to the achievement and maintenance of world peace, for democracy and peaceful settlement of disputes with full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development, and fundamental freedoms;





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Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraph 15 of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part II)) at its _____ meeting on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

Paragraph 15 was amended to read as follows:

15. *Obstacles:* The importance of a gender perspective in the development of macroeconomic policy is still not widely recognized. Many women still work in rural areas and the informal economy as subsistence producers, and in the service sector with low levels of income and little job or social security. Many women with comparable skills and experience are confronted with a gender wage gap and lag behind men in income and career mobility in the formal sector. Equal pay for women and men for equal work, or work of equal value, has not yet been fully realized. Gender discrimination in hiring and promotion and related to pregnancy, including through pregnancy testing, and sexual harassment in the workplace persist. In some countries, women's full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to inheritance, is not yet recognized in national legislation. Progression in the professions, in most cases, is still more difficult for women, owing to the lack of structures and measures that take into account maternity and family



responsibilities. In some cases, persistent gender stereotyping has led to a lower status for males who work as fathers and to insufficient encouragement for men to reconcile professional and family responsibilities. Lack of family-friendly policies regarding the organization of work increases these difficulties. Effective implementation of legislation and practical support systems is still inadequate. The combination of remunerated work and caregiving within families, households and communities still leads to a disproportionate burden for women as long as there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities by men. It is also still women who perform the larger part of unremunerated work.



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Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered several paragraphs of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part IV)) at its _____ meeting on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:
 - (a) Paragraph 102 (e) was deleted;
 - (b) Paragraph 103 (i) was amended to read: "Adopt and promote a holistic approach to respond to all forms of violence and abuse against girls and women of all ages, including girls and women with disabilities, as well as vulnerable and marginalized women and girls in order to address their diverse needs, including education, provision of appropriate health care and services and basic social services;"
 - (c) Paragraph 114 (b) was amended to read: "Encourage collaboration, where appropriate, among various levels of Governments, NGOs, grass-roots organizations, traditional and community leaders for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls and the dignity and worth of the human person and equal rights for women and men;"
 - (d) Paragraph 122 (b) *ter* was amended to read: "Take further effective measures to remove the obstacles to the realization of the right of peoples to self-



determination, in particular peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation that continue to adversely affect their economic and social development;"

(e) Paragraph 125 A was placed at paragraph 135 (c);

(f) Paragraph 125 C was placed at paragraph 135 (i);

(g) Paragraph 125 D was placed at paragraph 135 (b);

(h) Paragraph 125 G was placed at paragraph 135 (a);

(i) Paragraph 125 H was placed at paragraph 135 and amended to read: "Create an enabling environment as well as design and implement policies that promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights — civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, including the right to development — and fundamental freedoms, as part of the efforts to achieve gender equality, development and peace;"

(j) Paragraph 125 J was placed at paragraph 135 (g);

(k) Paragraph 125 (f) was deleted;

(l) Paragraph 125 (h) was amended to read: "Develop, with the full participation of all countries, an international consensus on indicators and ways to measure violence against women and consider establishing a readily accessible database on statistics, legislation, training models, good practices, lessons learned and other resources with regard to all forms of violence against women, including women migrant workers;"

(m) Paragraph 126 (b) was amended to read: "Support Governments in their efforts to institute action-oriented programmes and measures to accelerate the full implementation of the Platform for Action, with time-bound targets and/or measurable goals and evaluation methods, including gender impact assessments, with full participation of women for measuring and analysing progress;"

(n) Paragraph 126 (c) was deleted;

(o) Paragraph 127 (d) was deleted;

(p) Paragraph 127 (g) was amended to read: "Reaffirm commitment to gender-sensitive development and support women's role in sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management;"

(q) Paragraph 127 (j) was deleted;

(r) Paragraph 128 (i) was amended to read: "Continue to support and strengthen national, regional and international adult literacy programmes with international cooperation in order to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, an equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;"

(s) Paragraph 130 (a) was amended to read: "Increase cooperation, policy responses, effective implementation of national legislation and other protective and preventive measures aimed at the elimination of violence against women and girls, especially all forms of commercial sexual exploitation, as well as economic exploitation, including *inter alia*, trafficking in women and children, female infanticide, crimes committed in the name of honour, crimes committed in the name of passion, racially motivated crimes, abduction and sale of children, dowry-related

violence and deaths, acid attacks and harmful traditional or customary practices, such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriages;"

(t) Paragraph 130 (d) was amended to read: "Provide support to NGOs, in collaboration with the United Nations system, *inter alia*, through regional and international cooperation, including women's organizations and community groups, in addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, including for programmes to combat race and ethnic-based violence against women and girls;"

(u) Paragraph 132 (c) was amended to read: "Promote respect for the right of women and men to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Recognize the central role that religion, spirituality and belief play in the lives of millions of women and men;"

(v) Paragraph 133 (a) was amended to read: "Promote comprehensive human rights education programmes, *inter alia*, in cooperation, where appropriate, with education and human rights institutions, the relevant actors of civil society, in particular NGOs and the media networks, to ensure widespread dissemination of information on human rights instruments, in particular those on the human rights of women and girls;"

(w) Paragraph 134 (a) was amended to read: "Cooperate and work with private sector partners and media networks at the national and international levels to promote equal access for women and men as producers and consumers, particularly in the area of information and communications technologies, including through encouraging the media and the information industry, consistent with freedom of expression, to adopt or develop further codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self-regulatory guidelines to remove gender stereotypes and promote balanced portrayals of women and men;"

(x) Paragraph 134 (h) was amended to read: "Capitalize on the new information technologies, including the Internet, to improve the global sharing of information, research, strengths, lessons learned from women's experiences, including "Herstories" related to achieving gender equality, development and peace, and study other roles that these technologies can play towards that goal;"
(Note: footnote to be included.)

(y) Paragraph 125 G was placed at paragraph 135 (a) and amended to read: "Take effective measures to address the challenges of globalization, including through: the enhanced and effective participation of developing countries in the international economic policy decision-making process in order to, *inter alia*, guarantee the equal participation of women, in particular those from developing countries, in the process of macroeconomic decision-making;"

(z) Paragraph 125 D was placed at paragraph 135 (b) and amended to read: "Take measures, with the full and effective participation of women, to ensure new approaches to international development cooperation based on stability, growth and equity with the enhanced and effective participation and the integration of developing countries in the globalizing world economy, geared towards poverty eradication and the reduction of gender-based inequality within the overall framework of achieving people-centred sustainable development;"

(aa) Paragraph 125 A was placed at paragraph 135 (c) and amended to read: "Design and strengthen poverty eradication strategies with the full and effective

participation of women, that reduce the feminization of poverty and enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative economic and social impacts of globalization;"

(bb) Paragraph 135 (d) was amended to read: "Intensify efforts to implement poverty eradication programmes and evaluate, with the participation of women, the extent to which these programmes have an impact on the empowerment of women living in poverty, in terms of access to quality training and education as well as health care, employment, basic social services, inheritance, and access to and control over land, housing, income, micro-credit and other financial instruments and services, and introduce improvements to such programmes in the light of the above assessment;"

(cc) Paragraph 135 (e) *bis* was placed at paragraph 135 (e) and amended to read: "Recognizing the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication, elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender sensitive poverty eradication strategies addressing social, structural and macroeconomic issues;"

(dd) Paragraph 135 (g) was placed at paragraph 135 (f) and amended to read: "Encourage the establishment, in partnership with private financial institutions, where appropriate, of 'lending windows' and other accessible financial services with simplified procedures that are specifically designed to meet the savings, credit and insurance needs of all women;"

(ee) Paragraph 125 J was placed at paragraph 135 (g) and amended to read: "Undertake comprehensive actions to provide and support quality skills training for women and girls at all levels, on the basis of strategies developed with their full and effective participation, to achieve agreed targets to eradicate poverty, in particular the feminization of poverty, through national, regional and international efforts. National efforts need to be complemented by intensified regional and international cooperation in order to tackle the risks, overcome the challenges and ensure that opportunities created by globalization benefit women, particularly in developing countries;"

(ff) Paragraph 135 (e) was placed at paragraph 135 (h) and amended to read: "Establish, with the full and effective participation of women and in consultation with civil society, particularly NGOs, in a timely manner, social development funds, where appropriate, to alleviate the negative effects on women associated with structural adjustment programmes and trade liberalization and the disproportionate burden borne by women living in poverty;"

(gg) Paragraph 125 C was placed at paragraph 135 (i) and amended to read: "Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions which integrate a gender perspective into the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including least developed countries, *inter alia*, through debt relief, including the option of ODA debt cancellation, in order to help them to finance programmes and projects targeted at development, including the advancement of women;"

(hh) Paragraph 135 (f) was placed at paragraph 135 (j) and amended to read: "Support the Cologne initiative for the reduction of debt, particularly the speedy implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, ensure the provision of adequate funds for its implementation, and the provision that

funds saved should be used to support anti-poverty programmes that address gender dimensions;"

(ii) Paragraph 135 (b) *bis* was placed at paragraph 135 (m) and amended to read: "Facilitate the transfer to developing countries and countries with economies in transition of appropriate technology, particularly new and modern technology and encourage efforts by the international community to eliminate restrictions to such transfers, as an effective means of complementing national efforts for further acceleration in achieving the goals of gender equality, development and peace;"

(jj) Paragraph 136 (a) was amended to read: "Create and strengthen an enabling environment, in accordance with national laws, to support the capacity of women's NGOs to mobilize resources to ensure the sustainability of their development activities;"

(kk) Paragraph 136 (c) was amended to read: "Encourage the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships cooperation at all levels among international and intergovernmental organizations, with relevant actors of civil society including NGOs, private sector and trade unions, and women's organizations and other NGOs, communications and media systems in support of the goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women;"

(ll) Paragraph 136 (d) was amended to read: "Encourage partnerships and cooperation among Governments, international organizations, in particular international financial institutions and multilateral organizations, private sector institutions and civil society, including NGOs, especially women's and community-based organizations, to support poverty eradication initiatives focused on women and girls;"

(mm) Paragraph 138 (e) *bis* was amended to read: "Take effective and expeditious measures to mobilize international and national public opinion concerning the effects of different dimensions of the world drug problems on women and girls and ensure that appropriate resources are provided to this end".



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1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 43 *bis*, 43 *ter*, 44 and 46 *bis* of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part IV)) at its _____ meeting, on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

- (a) Paragraph 43 *bis* was amended to read:

"Governments and intergovernmental organizations recognize the contribution and complementary role of NGOs, with full respect for their autonomy, in ensuring the effective implementation of the Platform for Action and should continue to strengthen partnerships with NGOs, particularly women's organizations in contributing to the effective implementation and follow-up of the Platform for Action";

- (b) Paragraph 43 *ter* was amended to read:

"Experience has shown that the goal of gender equality can be fully achieved only in the context of renewed relations among different stakeholders at all levels. The full, effective participation of women on the basis of equality in all spheres of society is a necessary contribution to this goal";



- (c) Paragraph 44 was amended to read:

"Achieving gender equality and empowerment of women requires redressing inequalities between women and men and girls and boys and ensuring their equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and possibilities. Gender equality implies that women's as well as men's needs, interests, concerns, experiences and priorities are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, national monitoring, and follow-up and evaluation, including at the international level, of all actions in all areas";

- (d) Paragraph 46 *bis* was amended to read:

"Increased efforts are needed to provide equal access to education, health and social services and to ensure women's and girls' rights to education and the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and well-being throughout the life cycle, as well as adequate, affordable and universally accessible health care and services, including for sexual and reproductive health, particularly in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; they are also necessary with regard to the growing proportion of older women."



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1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 51, 51 *ter*, 52 and 53 *bis* of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part IV)) at its _____ meeting, on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

- (a) Paragraph 51 was amended to read:

“Violence against women and girls is a major obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of gender equality, development and peace. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Gender-based violence, such as battering and other domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual slavery and exploitation, and international trafficking in women and children, forced prostitution and sexual harassment, as well as violence against women resulting from cultural prejudice, racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia, pornography, ethnic cleansing, armed conflict, foreign occupation, religious and anti-religious extremism and terrorism are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must be combated and eliminated”;



(b) Paragraph 51 *ter* was amended to read:

"Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and is a strong force for social cohesion and integration and, as such, should be strengthened. The inadequate support to women and insufficient protection and support to their respective families affect society as a whole and undermine efforts to achieve gender equality. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist and the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected. Women's social and economic contributions to the welfare of the family and the social significance of maternity and paternity continue to be inadequately addressed. Motherhood and fatherhood and the role of parents and legal guardians in the family and in the upbringing of children and the importance of all family members to the family's well-being are also acknowledged and must not be a basis for discrimination. Women also continue to bear a disproportionate share of the responsibilities for the household and the care of children, the sick and the elderly. This imbalance needs to be consistently addressed through appropriate policies and programmes, in particular those geared towards education, and through legislation where appropriate. In order to achieve full partnership, in both public and private spheres, both women and men must be enabled to reconcile and share equally work responsibilities and family responsibilities";

(c) Paragraph 52 was amended to read:

"Strong national machineries for the advancement of women and promotion of gender equality require political commitment at the highest level and all necessary human and financial resources to initiate, recommend and facilitate the development, adoption and monitoring of policies, legislation, programmes and capacity-building for the empowerment of women and to act as catalysts for open public dialogue on gender equality as a societal goal. This would enable them to promote the advancement of women and mainstream a gender perspective in policies and programmes in all areas, to play an advocacy role and to ensure equal access to all institutions and resources, as well as enhanced capacity-building for women in all sectors. Reforms to meet the challenges of the changing world are essential to ensuring women's equal access to institutions and organizations. Institutional and conceptual changes are a strategic and important aspect of creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Platform for Action";

(d) Paragraph 53 *bis* was amended to read:

"Girls and women of all ages with any form of disability are generally among the more vulnerable and marginalized members of society. There is therefore a need to take into account and address their concerns in all policy-making and programming. Special measures are needed at all levels to integrate them into the mainstream of development."



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1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 20, 21, 23, 25 and 27 of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part II)) at its _____ meeting on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

Health

*8. *Achievements:* Programmes have been implemented to create awareness among policy makers and planners of the need for health programmes to cover all aspects of women's health throughout women's life cycle, which have contributed to an increase in life expectancy in many countries. There is: increased attention to high mortality rates among women and girls as a result of malaria, tuberculosis, water-borne diseases, communicable and diarrhoeal diseases and malnutrition; increased attention to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women as contained in paragraphs 94 and 95 of the Platform for Action, as well as in some countries increased emphasis on implementing paragraph 96 of the Platform for Action; increased knowledge and use of family planning and contraceptive methods as well as increased awareness among men of their responsibility in family planning and contraceptive methods and their use; increased attention to sexually transmitted infections, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency



syndrome (HIV/AIDS) among women and girls and methods to protect against such infections; increased attention to breast-feeding, nutrition, infants' and mothers' health; the introduction of a gender perspective in health and health-related educational and physical activities, and gender-specific prevention and rehabilitation programmes on substance abuse, including tobacco, drugs and alcohol; increased attention to women's mental health, health conditions at work, environmental considerations and recognition of the specific health needs of older women. The General Assembly at its twenty-first special session (30 June to 2 July 1999) reviewed achievements and adopted key actions in the field of women's health for further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

*9. *Obstacles:* Worldwide, the gap between and within rich and poor countries with respect to infant mortality and maternal mortality and morbidity rates, as well as with respect to measures addressing the health of women and girls, given their special vulnerability regarding sexually transmitted infections, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and other sexual and reproductive health problems, together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoeal and water-borne diseases and chronic non-transmissible diseases remains unacceptable. In some countries, such endemic, infectious and communicable diseases, continue to take a toll on women and girls. In other countries, non-communicable diseases, such as cardiopulmonary diseases, hypertension and degenerative diseases, remain among the major causes of mortality and morbidity among women. Despite progress in some countries, the rates of maternal mortality and morbidity remain unacceptably high in most countries. Investment in essential obstetric care remains insufficient in many countries. The absence of a holistic approach to health and health care for women and girls based on women's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health throughout the life-cycle has constrained progress. Some women continue to encounter barriers to their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The predominant focus of health-care systems on treating illness rather than maintaining optimal health also prevents a holistic approach. There is, in some countries, insufficient attention to the role of economic and social determinants of health. A lack of access to clean water, adequate nutrition, safe sanitation and of gender-specific health research and technology, as well as insufficient gender sensitivity in the provision of health information and health care and health services, including those related to environmental and occupational health hazards, affect women in developing and developed countries. Poverty and the lack of development continue to affect the capacity of many developing countries to provide and expand quality health care. A shortage of financial and human resources, in particular in developing countries, as well as restructuring of the health sector and/or the increasing trend towards privatization of health-care systems in some cases, has resulted in poor quality, reduced and insufficient health-care services, and has also led to less attention to the health of the most vulnerable groups of women. Obstacles such as unequal power relationships between women and men, where women often do not have the power to insist on safe and responsible sex practices, and a lack of communication and understanding between men and women on women's health needs, *inter alia*, endanger women's health, particularly by increasing their susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and affect women's access to health care and education, especially in relation to prevention. Adolescents, particularly

adolescent girls continue to lack access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services. Women who are recipients of health care are frequently not treated with respect or guaranteed privacy and confidentiality, and do not receive full information about options and services available. In some cases, health services and workers still do not conform to human rights and to ethical, professional and gender-sensitive standards in the delivery of women's health services, nor do they ensure responsible, voluntary and informed consent. There continues to be a lack of information on availability and access to appropriate, affordable, primary health-care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care, sufficient attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care as well as a lack of prevention, screening and treatment for breast, cervical and ovarian cancers and osteoporosis. The testing and development of male contraceptives is still insufficient. While some measures have been taken in some countries, the actions contained in paragraphs 106 (j) and 106 (k) of the Platform for Action regarding the health impact of unsafe abortion and the need to reduce the recourse to abortion have not been fully implemented. The rising incidence of tobacco use among women, particularly young women, has increased their risk of cancer and other serious diseases as well as gender-specific risks from tobacco and environmental tobacco smoke.

11. *Obstacles:* Women continue to be victims of various forms of violence. Inadequate understanding of the root causes of all forms of violence against women and girls hinders efforts to eliminate such violence. There is a lack of comprehensive programmes dealing with the perpetrators, including programmes, where appropriate, which would enable them to solve problems without violence. Inadequate data on violence further impede informed policy-making and analysis. Socio-cultural attitudes which are discriminatory and economic inequalities reinforce women's subordinate place in society. This makes women and girls vulnerable to many forms of violence, such as physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation. In many countries, a coordinated multidisciplinary approach to responding to violence which includes the health system, workplaces, the media, the education system and the justice system is still limited. Domestic violence, including sexual violence in marriage, is still treated as a private matter in some countries. Insufficient awareness of the consequences of domestic violence, how to prevent it and the rights of victims still exists. Although improving, the legal and legislative measures, especially in the criminal justice area, to eliminate different forms of violence against women and children, including domestic violence and child pornography, are weak in many countries. Prevention strategies also remain fragmented and reactive and there is a lack of programmes on these issues. It is also noted that, in some countries, problems have arisen from the use of new information and communication technologies for trafficking in women and children and for the purposes of all forms of economic and sexual exploitation.

23. *Obstacles:* Negative, violent and/or degrading images of women, including pornography and stereotyped portrayals, have increased in different forms using new communication technologies in some instances, and bias against women remains in the media. Poverty, the lack of access and opportunities, illiteracy, lack of computer literacy and language barriers, prevent some women from using the information and

communication technologies, including the Internet. Development of and access to the Internet infrastructure is especially limited in developing countries and particularly for women.

25. *Obstacles:* There is still a lack of public awareness about environmental risks faced by women and of the benefits of gender equality for promoting environmental protection. Women's limited access to technical skills, resources and information, in particular in developing countries, owing to, among others, gender inequality, have impeded women's effective participation in decision-making, regarding the sustainable environment, including at the international level. Research, action, targeted strategies and public awareness remain limited regarding the differential impacts and implications of environmental problems for women and men. Real solutions to environmental problems, including environmental degradation, need to address the root causes of these problems, such as foreign occupation. Environmental policies and programmes lack a gender perspective and fail to take into account women's roles and contributions to environmental sustainability.

Human rights and the girl child

*20. *Achievements:* Legal reforms have been undertaken to prohibit all forms of discrimination and discriminatory provisions have been eliminated in civil, penal and personal status law governing marriage and family relations, all forms of violence, women's property and ownership rights and women's political, work and employment rights. Steps have been taken to realize women's de facto enjoyment of their human rights through the creation of an enabling environment, including the adoption of policy measures, the improvement of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms and the implementation of legal literacy and awareness campaigns at all levels. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been ratified or acceded to by 165 countries and its full implementation has been promoted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention, allowing women claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Convention by a State party to submit their claims to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and non-governmental organizations contributed by raising awareness and generating support for its adoption. Women's NGOs have also contributed to raising awareness that women's rights are human rights. They also generated support for the inclusion of a gender perspective in the elaboration of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Progress has also been made to integrate the human rights of women and mainstream a gender perspective into the United Nations system, including into the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and of the Commission on Human Rights.

*21. *Obstacles:* Gender discrimination and all other forms of discrimination, in particular racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance continue to threaten women's enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In situations of armed conflict and foreign occupation, the human rights of women have been extensively violated. Even though a number of countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the goal of universal ratification by the year 2000 has not been achieved, and there continues to be a large number of reservations to the Convention. While there is an increasing acceptance of gender equality, many countries have not yet implemented

fully the provisions of the Convention. Discriminatory legislation as well as harmful traditional and customary practices and negative stereotyping of women and men still persist. Family, civil, penal, labour and commercial laws or codes, or administrative rules and regulations, still have not fully integrated a gender perspective. Legislative and regulatory gaps, as well as lack of implementation and enforcement of legislation and regulations, perpetuate *de jure* as well as *de facto* inequality and discrimination, and in a few cases, new laws discriminating against women have been introduced. In many countries, women have insufficient access to the law, resulting from illiteracy, lack of legal literacy, information and resources, insensitivity and gender bias, and lack of awareness of the human rights of women by law enforcement officials and the judiciary, who in many cases fail to respect the human rights of women and the dignity and worth of the human person. There is insufficient recognition of women's and girls' reproductive rights, as well as barriers to their full enjoyment of those rights, which embrace certain human rights as defined in paragraph 95 of the Beijing Platform for Action. Some women and girls continue to encounter barriers to justice and the enjoyment of their human rights because of such factors as their race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or socio-economic class or because they are indigenous people, migrants, including women migrant workers, displaced women or refugees.

*27. *Obstacles:* The persistence of poverty, discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls, negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls as well as negative stereotyping of girls and boys which limit girls' potential, and inadequate awareness of the specific situation of the girl child, child labour, and the heavy burden of domestic responsibilities on girls, inadequate nutrition and access to health services, and lack of finance which often prevent girls from pursuing and completing their education and training, have contributed to a lack of opportunities and possibilities for girls to become confident and self-reliant, and independent adults. Poverty, lack of parental support and guidance, lack of information and education, abuse and all forms of exploitation of, and violence against the girl child, in many cases result in unwanted pregnancies and transmission of HIV, which may also lead to a restriction on educational opportunities. Programmes for the girl child were hindered by a lack of or an insufficient allocation of financial and human resources. There were few established national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, coordination among responsible institutions was insufficient. The increased awareness of the health needs, including the sexual and reproductive health needs, of adolescents has not yet resulted in sufficient provision of necessary information and services. Despite advances in legal protection, there is increased sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of the girl child. Adolescents continue to lack the education and service needed to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality.



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Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 28 and 30 *sexiens* of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part III)) at its _____ meeting, on 9 June 2000.
2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

- (a) Paragraph 28 was amended to read:

"The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action occurred in a rapidly changing global context. Since 1995, a number of issues have gained prominence and acquired new dimensions which pose additional challenges to the full and accelerated implementation of the Platform in order for Governments, intergovernmental bodies, international organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, to realize gender equality, development and peace. Continued political commitment to gender equality at all levels is needed for the full implementation of the Platform for Action;"

- (b) Paragraph 30 *sexiens* was merged with paragraph 51 *ter*.

